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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/606,911	06/26/2003	Eugene H. Carlson	55313US010	5716
32692	7590	03/11/2004	EXAMINER	
3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY PO BOX 33427 ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427			PURVIS, SUE A	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1734		

DATE MAILED: 03/11/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/606,911	CARLSON ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit		
Sue A. Purvis	1734		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-11 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 12-20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 June 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

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Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 25 Sep 2003.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 1-11 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the paper dated 25 February 2004.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. Claims 12-14, 16, 18, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Olsen (US Patent No. 5,916,399) in view of Orensteen et al. (US Patent No. 5,706,133).

Olsen discloses a retro reflective transfer sheet material where carrier (16) includes a plurality of discrete segments (20, 24) with an adhesive surface (28) and the viewing

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surface (26) being attached to the carrier (16). The adhesive surface (28) is applied to the substrate (30). (Figures 1 and 2; Col. 8, lines 6-24.)

Olsen does not disclose protecting the adhesive (28) with a release surface.

Orensteen discloses making retro reflective articles where the articles are fed in a roll of sheeting (20) and transferred to the substrate at a station (300). (See Figure 3.)

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to feed the material in Olsen in roll form as shown in Orensteen, because a roll of articles adhered to a sheet is a well known method of feeding flexible articles to be transfer. As such, the adhesive of the articles in Olsen would be protected by the carrier until the article is unrolled.

Regarding claim 13, Olsen in view of Orensteen includes a supply roll.

Regarding claim 14, when the article is unrolled, a release liner is removed.

Regarding claim 16, where the carrier is removed, a major viewing surface is exposed.

Regarding claim 18, a retro reflective article is eye catching and has the quality or state of being attracting attention or being the quality or state of being conspicuity.

Regarding claim 19, Olsen teachings using hot melt adhesive. (See Claim 14.)

5. Claims 17 and 20 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Olsen in view of Orensteen as described above with respect to claims 12 and 18 above, and further in view of Bacon, Jr. et al. (US Patent No. 6,508,559).

Olsen in view of Orensteen does not disclose the extensibility of the carrier web.

Bacon, Jr. discloses that it is known in the art to have an extensible carrier web, especially when the material is meant to be "conformable."

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an extensible carrier web in the method of Olsen in view of

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Orensteen, because of the teaching in Bacon where an extensible carrier web helps in the transfer process.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

7. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

8. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is not supported by either a specific and substantial asserted utility or a well established utility.

There is no discussion in the specification as to why the carrier is partially torn, nor could the examiner ascertain what are the advantages to the applicant. Furthermore, during examination and searching, the examiner did not discover a well-established utility for partially tearing the carrier web.

Claim 15 also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Specifically, since the claimed invention is not supported by either a specific and substantial asserted utility or a well established utility for the reasons set forth above, one skilled in the art clearly would not know how to use the claimed invention.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sue A. Purvis whose telephone number is (571) 272-1236. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 9am to 6pm.

9. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rick Crispino can be reached on (571) 272-1226. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Sue A. Purvis
Examiner
Art Unit 1734

SP
March 6, 2004